

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

In addition, you cannot convince me that Sinclair's attempt to force this program onto the airwaves is not a pro-Bush political campaign ad. Just look at the connection between Sinclair and a company in which it invests, Jadoo. Jadoo's CEO met one-on-one with President Bush to discuss the company's technology, and then, poof, they were awarded a no-bid contract with the Defense Dept. It is also well known that Sinclair donates money to Republican causes. Finally, the filmmaker himself is close to Charles Gerow, CEO of Quantum Communications, a delegate to this year's RNC, and a member of the Republican National Lawyers Association.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.